

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

A. Summary of the Amendment

Reexamination and reconsideration are courteously requested. By way of the present amendment, claims 15 and 27 are amended. Further, claims 6, 26, and 31 to 48 are canceled. Thus, claims 1 to 25, and 27 to 30 remain pending for the Examiner's consideration, with claims 1, 15, and 27 being independent claims.

B. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 15, 19, and 22 to 25 are rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,183,888(Alperine). These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the present amendment.

Independent claim 15 recites a process for preparing a coated component, and specifically recites the step of:

b) electroplating a metal layer on a surface ... from an electrolytic bath comprising a platinum salt electrolyte and particles of at least one supplemental constituent... .

In contrast, Alperine fails to disclose any coating process in which a platinum salt electrolyte is used to electroplate platinum, together with a supplementary metal, onto a substrate. Alperine discloses a coating process involving electrolytic deposition of platinum metal (col. 6, line 64 to col. 7, line 14). However, the platinum in the electrolytic bath is either pure platinum or a platinum alloy such as platinum-rhodium or platinum-nickel, and is not a platinum salt. Furthermore, the electrolytic bath does not include any supplementary metal constituents from the Markush group recited in claim 15. Thus, it is clear that Alperine fails to anticipate independent claim 15. For at least these reasons, it is submitted that the rejection of claim 15, and dependent claims 19, and 22 to 25, should be withdrawn.

C. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1 to 12, 16 to 18, 27, and 29 to 30, are rejected as being unpatentable over Alperine in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,810,334 (Honey). These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the present amendment to independent claims 1, 10, 15, and 27. Please see at least page 11, line 24, and page 20, line 28 as support for the amendment to the claims.

Each of the independent claims recites that a layer having a thickness of less than about 10 microns is electroplated to include platinum and particles having a thickness ranging between 1 micron and 10 microns. This feature was not expected to be obtainable by the present inventors because it was not thought that a thin platinum layer (i.e. of less than about 10 microns in thickness) would be able to entrap particles as large as 1 micron, and up to 10 microns, in average particle diameter.

None of the prior art references teaches or suggests concurrent electroplating of platinum together with particles having the claimed particle size. Further, none of the references teaches or suggests formation of a particle-entrapping metal layer having a thickness as small as that presently claimed. Alperine fails to disclose any type of particles entrapped in an electroplated layer. Honey fails to compensate for this deficiency. Honey is merely directed to layers having a thickness of 25 to 150 microns (col. 2, lines 66 to 68), and makes no mention of platinum as a metal that entraps the metal particles. A person of ordinary skill in the art certainly would not be motivated from reviewing Alperine and Honey to arrive at the present invention, particularly since the elements of the claims are nowhere suggested in either reference.

The remaining rejections of claims 13 to 14, 20 to 21, and 28 are traversed in view of the same arguments. None of the remaining cited prior art references (Strangman, Adams) is directed to any type of electroplating method in which particles are co-deposited together with another metal to form a single layer. Thus, the cited prior art fails to teach or suggest the features recited in the independent claims. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

D. Conclusion

In view of Applicant's amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that Examiner's objections and rejections have been overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance, and such allowance is therefore earnestly requested. Should the Examiner have any questions or wish to further discuss this application, Applicants request that the Examiner contact the Applicants attorneys at the below-listed telephone number.

If for some reason Applicants have not requested a sufficient extension and/or have not paid a sufficient fee for this response and/or for the extension necessary to prevent abandonment on this application, please consider this as a request for an extension for the required time period and/or authorization to charge Deposit Account No. 50-2091 for any fee which may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

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